

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Loch an Eich-uisge (2)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,320. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,016 corresponds to Litir 1,320. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Tha loch ann an ceann a tuath Bharraigh, agus 's e 'Loch an Eich-uisge' a chanas muinntir an àite ris. Chan eil mapaichean na Suirbhìdh Òrdanais a' toirt ainm sam bith dha. 'S e loch beag bìodach a th' ann, don iar-thuath air Loch na Cuilce.

Chùm sàr-sgeulaiche Barrach dualchas an locha beò ann am beul-aithris an eilein. B' esan Iain Mac a' Phearsain no 'An Codaidh' mar a b' fheàrr a dh'aithnicheadh e.

Chaidh an Codaidh a chlàradh ann an Gàidhlig ag innse sgeul Loch an Eich-uisge. **Gheibhear cothrom èisteachd ris** air làrach-lìn Thobar an Dualchais. Tha a' Ghàidhlig aige brèagha, ach bidh e a' bruidhinn **gu luath luath**. Ma tha e ro dhoirbh dhuibh a thuigsinn, tha cunntas aige ann am Beurla cuideachd anns an leabhar '*Tales from Barra*'. Co-dhiù, seo mo dhreach fhèin air an sgeul.

Bha boireannach a' buachailleachd ri taobh Loch an Eich-uisge. Chunnaic i fear air bruach an locha. Bha e na chadal. Shaoil am boireannach nach fhaca i riamh fear cho brèagha ris. Chuir i a cheann na h-uchd agus thòisich i air fhalt a shliobadh is a chìreadh. Bha camagan òr-bhuidhe aige a bha a' dol sìos mu a chluasan.

Mhothaich am boireannach rudeigin annasach. Fillte ann am falt an duine, bha *rathabhaich*. Bidh cuid a' gabhail 'rabhann' air. 'S e sin lus – car coltach ri fear – a tha a' fàs a-mhàin ann an uisge. Chuir sin an t-iongantais air a' boireannach. Chuimhnich i gun robh a h-athair 's a màthair agus feadhainn eile air innse dhi gun robh each-uisge a' fuireach anns an loch.

Thòisich i air a ràdh rithe fhèin, 'Math dh'fhaodte gur e an t-each-uisge a tha seo. 'S fheàrr dhomh teicheadh.'

Ge-tà, bha ceann an duine na h-uchd fhathast. Cha robh i airson a dhùsgadh. Mar sin, leig i a sgiorta dhith gu faiceallach, ga fàgail fhathast fo cheann an duine. Bha plaide tartain aice faisg air làimh. Chuir i sin oirre agus dh'fhalbh i dhachaigh na deann.

Nuair a dhùisg an duine, dh'atharraich e gu bhith air ais na riochd nàdarrach mar each. Bha e feargach nuair a chunnaic e gun robh am boireannach air falbh. Dh'èirich e agus le a chasan chuir e smùid às na creagan an sin. Chithear fhathast far an do rinn e sgrios air na creagan, gam bristeadh. Chan eil fhios dè thachair don each-uisge ach chan fhacas tuilleadh e ri taobh an locha sin.

Sin, ma-thà, an dàrna loch as aithne dhomh air a' Ghàidhealtachd air a bheil 'Loch an Eich-uisge' mar ainm. Ach tha ainm-àite inntinneach anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Air na mapaichean, 's e Loch na Doireanach a th' air an loch. Tha e ann an Slèite, anns a' mhonadh eadar An t-Òrd agus An Teanga.

Chan eil e follaiseach sa mhionaid gu bheil ainm an locha ceangailte ri each-uisge, ach tha. A rèir muinntir an àite, 's e Loch na Doireanaich a bu chòir a bhith air an loch. Tha e a' tighinn bho Loch Doir' an Eich 'the loch of the grove of the horse' – an t-ainm a bh' air an loch air a' chiad mhapa dheth a rinn an t-Suirbhidh Òrdanais. Bheir sinn sùil air an ainm agus air an sgeul an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: beag bìodach: *tiny*; sàr-sgeulaiche: *wonderful storyteller*; Iain Mac a' Phearsain: *John MacPherson*; a' buachailleachd: *herding livestock*; plaide tartain: *tartan plaid*; Slèite: *Sleat*.

Abairtean na Litreach: ann an ceann a tuath Bharraigh: *in the north of Barra*; a chanas muinntir an àite ris: *that the local people call it*; mar a b' fheàrr a dh'aithnicheadh e: *as he was best known*; tha a' Ghàidhlig aige brèagha: *his Gaelic is lovely*; ma tha e ro dhoirbh dhuibh a thuigsinn: *if it is too difficult for you to understand it*; co-dhiù, seo mo dhreach fhèin air an sgeul: *anyway, here is my own version of the story*; shaoil am boireannach nach fhaca i riamh fear cho brèagha ris: *the woman thought she had never seen a man as attractive as him*; chuir i a cheann na h-uchd agus thòisich i air fhalt a shliobadh is a chireadh: *she put his head on her lap and she started to stroke and comb his hair*; bha camagan òr-bhuidhe aige a bha a' dol sìos mu a chluasan: *he had golden locks that went down around his ears*; fillte ann am falt an duine, bha rathabhaich: *entwined in the man's hair was a water weed*; a tha a' fàs a-mhàin ann an uisge: *that only grows in water*; 's fheàrr dhomh teicheadh: *I'd better flee*; cha robh i airson a dhùsgadh: *she didn't want to wake him*; leig i a sgiorta dhith gu faiceallach: *she took off her skirt carefully*; dh'fhalbh i dhachaigh na deann: *she ran home*; dh'atharraich e gu bhith air ais na riochd nàdarra mar each: *he changed back into his natural form as a horse*; le a chasan chuir e smùid às na creagan an sin: *with his feet he smashed the rocks into smithereens*; chan fhacas tuilleadh e: *he was never seen again*; anns a' mhonadh eadar An t-Òrd agus An Teanga: *in the hills between Ord and Teangue*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: bidh e a' bruidhinn **gu luath luath**: *he speaks extremely quickly. We can repeat adjectives to emphasise them e.g. bha e mòr mòr 'it was very big'*; tha mi cinnteach cinnteach 'I'm absolutely certain'; bha sin luachmhor luachmhor 'that was really valuable'. This can also work with the adjective in an adverbial situation e.g. Ò, gu cinnteach cinnteach! 'Oh, absolutely certainly'; bhiodh e a' bruidhinn gu slaodach slaodach 'he would speak extremely slowly'; bha e a' dealradh gu soilleir soilleir 'it was shining very brightly'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Gheibhear cothrom èisteachd ris: *an opportunity to listen to it will [can] be obtained*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA